

**From:** Thomas and Denise Caudron  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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**Subject:** The MS Settlement Talks

As a member of the Information Technology community, an experienced programmer, a Microsoft-Certified Systems Engineer, and a voter, I ask that you seriously reconsider /any/ deal with Microsoft that does not substantially limit Microsoft's overwhelming influence in the industry.

While I can appreciate that Microsoft must seek profit to satisfy its shareholders' interests, I have seen all too many good technologies sit unused because Microsoft employed unreasonable and illegal practices to leverage its current monopoly of the operating system to create new monopolies in other areas (C.f., the Microsoft Office suite, the Browser, etc...) and against its competitors (C.f., the former Be, Inc, the former Stac, Inc., the former...you get the idea).

Current settlement suggestions are NOT enough. Might I suggest that Microsoft be penalized heavily by forcing them to make good on their school offer, but instead of having them supply the schools with Microsoft software, force them to purchase hardware and use free software, like Red Hat Linux, perhaps even forcing them to purchase a support contract from Red Hat for the schools. That would give there competitors a leg up at Microsoft's expense. Just a thought.

Either way, I know the government is interested in limiting what Microsoft puts into the core operating system. I'd suggest that it concentrate on what Microsoft pulls out of the OS. for instance, adding the browser to the OS for free is fine by me, as long as they don't use it to crush all competition, then pull it back out and charge for it. Perhaps the government should be permissive with what MS puts into their OS, but stingy with what it allows them to pull out.

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